

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 195 986

CS 005 809

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 TITLE Using Every-Pupil Response Techniques to Develop Decoding Ability.
 PUB DATE Nov 80
 NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the California Reading Association (14th, Sacramento, CA, November 6-8, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS *Decoding (Reading); *Directed Reading Activity; Elementary Education; Learning Activities; *Phonics; *Reading Instruction; Reading Skills; *Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

Noting that "every pupil response" (EPR) techniques allow for all students in a group to respond to each question asked by a teacher, this paper explains how EPR techniques may be incorporated in a reading lesson to help students develop decoding ability. The paper offers a justification for using these directed teaching strategies based on research data and classroom practice. It then describes three levels of requisite phonics skills (auditory discrimination of sounds, sound-letter correspondence, and applied phonics) and presents sample lessons to develop each. (FL)

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USING EVERY-PUPIL RESPONSE TECHNIQUES TO DEVELOP DECODING ABILITY

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There seems to be universal agreement on the importance of phonics instruc-

tion to learning to read. The value of teaching phonetic analysis as one essential method of independent word attack is incontrovertibly accepted. This is evidenced by the substantial coverage accorded it in textbooks by authorities on the teaching of reading (Durrell 1956, Heilman 1972, Farr and Roser 1979). The content and teaching methodologies of phonics are integral topics in scores of required pre-and inservice education courses on reading instruction. Phonics instruction is included in all major basic reading series currently in use (Austin and Morrison 1963). School districts demand that phonics be taught in their curriculum and actual classroom observations indicate that teachers in practice do devote considerable amounts of time to phonics activities.

The controversy concerning phonics lies not in its value, but rather in the emphasis it receives in a particular instructional program; what method of instruction is used, synthetic or intrinsic; and sequence in which the phonic generalizations are taught. These are very real issues, in particular for teachers who use and have to supplement and/or defend a reading program that incorporates a "meaning-emphasis" rather than a "code emphasis" approach (Chall 1967). Phonics instruction in some "meaning-emphasis" series is frequently criticized for being titular, parochial, superficial, and inadequate to promote independent application of the principles.

The purpose of this paper is to explain how every pupil response (EPR) techniques may be incorporated in the reading lesson to help students develop decoding ability. Justification for using these directed teaching strategies based on research data and classroom practice is outlined. Three levels of requisite phonics skills are described. Sample lessons to develop each of the three stages of phonic

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ability are exhibited. Such lessons may be particularly commodious in reading programs where the teacher's manual indicates a particular phonic element or skill should be taught and perhaps there is insufficient guidance or no suggested procedure for doing so. This kind of lesson may also be practicable in programs where additional directed teaching and guided practice are needed.

Research Evidence

Research is now giving credence to what conventional wisdom and common sense have told us for years. Data from the Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (1978), comes as no surprise and supports the contention that students learn more when they accumulate higher amounts of academic learning time. The concept of academic learning time refers to the amount of time students spend actively engaged in or being on task in academic work, while also performing with a high rate of success. The BTES also revealed that students spend greater amounts of time on task when they work under the direction of the teacher rather than when they work independently.

In the lessons to develop decoding ability the teacher does this directed teaching. Thus a situation is created in which the students are intensely involved and attending to task. They are therefore more apt to have higher engagement rates that have been shown to contribute toward greater achievement.

Classroom Practice

These EPR activities are a method of involving the total group or class in the teaching/learning process and can be used effectively in teaching phonics skills as well as a multitude of other reading skills (Hopkins 1979).

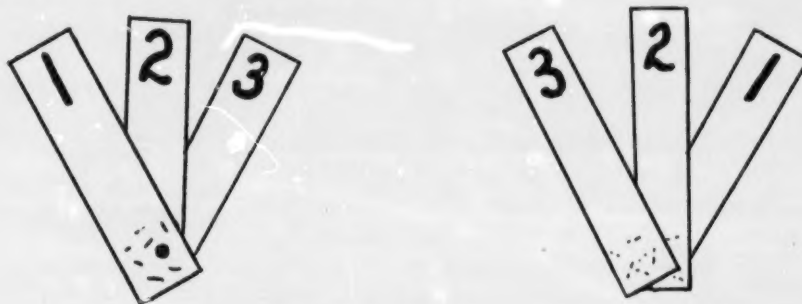
The advantages of employing mutiple response activities in teaching are numerous: Instead of calling on one pupil at a time, EPR techniques provide for all pupils in the group to make an overt response to each question asked by the teacher. It takes the "sit and wait" out of learning as everyone is involved with every item, rather than waiting for a turn to respond. Passive participation

disappears as each pupil is forced to pay attention, go through the thinking process, and respond in some way each time the teacher poses a question. Behavior problems diminish because all pupils are busy with some sort of device or signal for responding. The teacher can check at a glance to see if pupils understand or need more practice. Immediate feedback on each question may be given to a number of students at once. Corrections take place immediately so that mistaken learning patterns don't develop.

More efficient use of teacher and pupil time can be made. Rather than having students write reams of seatwork to be corrected, they can receive more practice in less time. Also the time involved for a teacher to prepare EPR lessons is far less than to prepare a ditto or other written seatwork. EPR techniques hold pupil interest and make learning more fun because of the varied approaches.

Response Devices

There are many different ways for students to respond to EPR activities: with flash cards, markers, yes/no response fans, number response fans, hand signals, various manipulative devices, or by writing. For the following lessons that develop decoding ability, each student will need a number response fan. The fan is made by stapling 4 1½" X 5" tagboard strips together. Large numbers are printed on both sides with a black felt tip pen. The pupil puts his/her thumb on the black dot so the numbers are in order as he/she looks at it. The fan is held up under the chin. As the teacher reads each item on the lesson, the pupils all respond by touching the number that corresponds to the answer. The teacher sees the numbers in reverse order.



Number Response Fan

Three Levels of Phonics Ability

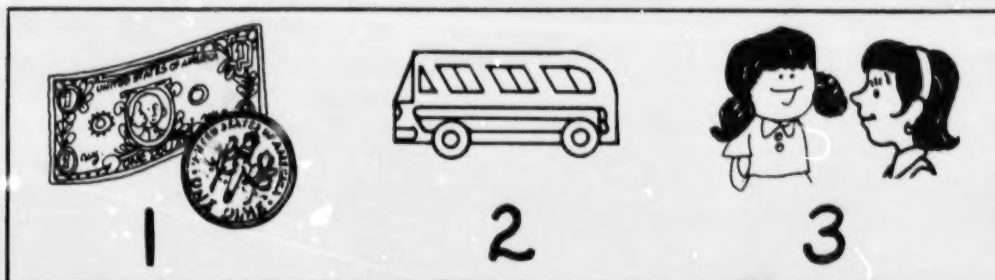
In order for decoding to play a functional role in the reading process, students need to be proficient in three levels of phonic ability. "Auditory discrimination of sounds in words provides the basis for effective use of phonics." (Durrell 1956). This statement authoritatively sums up the importance of this frequently neglected first step in phonics instruction. Auditory discrimination ability includes such skills as being able to hear separate sounds in spoken words, identify words that rhyme, and recognize the position of sounds in words. These auditory skills all require no visual symbol association and are generally covered at the reading readiness level. Students who are taught sound-letter correspondences too soon, prior to having these auditory abilities are apt to have later difficulties in applying phonic knowledge. Although they may be able to identify and produce sounds in isolation, they may not have adequate auditory facility to be able to combine the separate sounds into words. The second step in phonics instruction is to teach which sounds are associated with certain symbols. Many of the teaching and practice materials concerning phonics, emphasize the skills contained in this second step. This is at the expense of not adequately providing for the first auditory readiness stage or carrying through to the important third step, which is the opportunity to apply phonic knowledge. In the third step students should be taught how to decode or identify new words through the application of the phonics principles (the sound/symbol relationships) they have learned in the second step.

1) Auditory Discrimination of Sounds

As the initial step in teaching phonics, the teacher provides experiences for the student in hearing likenesses and differences in sounds in spoken words. Because students at this stage are not yet learning the corresponding written symbols for sounds, the lessons will of necessity incorporate only pictures and no words. Many reading readiness programs have a paucity of teaching suggestions and practice materials to sufficiently sharpen these auditory abilities. Commonly

the exercises that do appear in workbooks or on worksheets require the student to mark all of the pictures that rhyme with or begin like one of the pictures. It has been this authors experience that the number of items to which students are asked to respond, falls short of the number necessary to cement the learning that is required for an adequate foundation.

In each of the lessons described in this paper (see reduced facsimiles) the teacher holds up and shows the front of the 6" X 18" tagboard card to the students. He/she reads the directions on the back to the students. With just three pictures from a magazine or workbook, legions of practice items can be presented at one time to a group of students. The following lesson helps students discriminate beginning sounds prior to mentioning any relationship with the symbols m, b, and g.



Front

BEGINNING SOUND CRIP LESSON

money	bus	girl
1	2	3

Put your finger on the number of the picture that begins with the same sound as the words I pronounce.

- | | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. bell (2) | 11. go (3) | 21. message (1) | 31. melody (1) |
| 2. box (2) | 12. monkey (1) | 22. mark (1) | 32. magic (1) |
| 3. goose (3) | 13. basket (2) | 23. garden (3) | 33. banner (2) |

Back

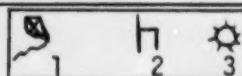
Kindergarten and first grade teachers devote considerable amounts of time to helping students develop rhyming ability, many times without knowing the reason why. Of course rhymes are fun and they may assist in improving listening skills. But the purpose of rhyming activities as they relate to reading instruction, is to give students a preliminary auditory ability that is essential to do the applied phonics skills of consonant, digraph, and blend substitution later on

in reading. Below is a sample EPR lesson in identifying words that rhyme:



Front

RHYMING WORD STRIP LESSON

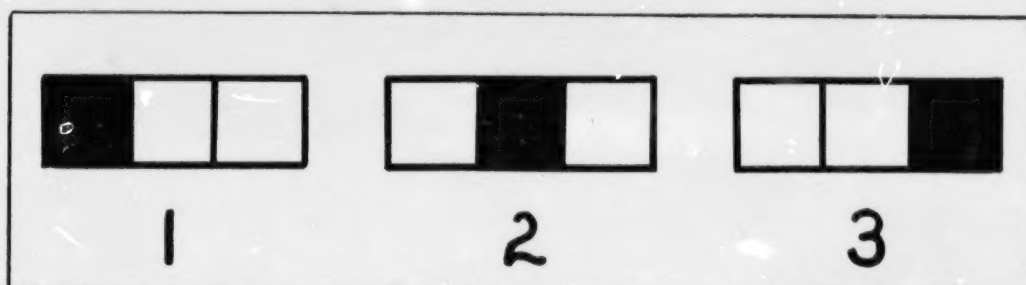


Put your finger on the number of the picture that rhymes with the word I pronounce.

- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. bright (2) | 11. fight (2) | 21. run (3) | 31. light (2) |
| 2. air (1) | 12. bear (1) | 22. scare (1) | 32. ton (3) |
| 3. fun (3) | 13. none (3) | 23. hair (1) | 33. night (2) |

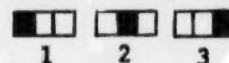
Back

Another type of lesson that sharpens auditory discrimination ability is to have the students respond by indicating the position in a word where they hear a particular sound. In the case of the lesson below the focus is on listening where the /m/m/ sound is in each word as it is read by the teacher:



Front

SOUND POSITION LESSON /m/m/



Put your finger on the number that corresponds to the place in the word where you hear the /m/m/ sound.

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. match (1) | 11. hamburger (2) | 21. farmer (2) | 31. him (3) |
| 2. him (3) | 12. magic (1) | 22. me (1) | 32. comet (2) |
| 3. mother (1) | 13. lunchroom (3) | 23. Sam (3) | 33. thermos (2) |

Back

2) Sound-Letter Correspondance

Once students have developed the ability to auditorily discriminate likenesses and differences in spoken words, they are then generally ready to benefit from instruction in sound-symbol relationships. This second step in phonics instruction is perhaps the one that is most adequately covered in most basal programs and by most teachers. After many classroom observations, it is this author's opinion that when phonics instruction does take place, the lesson is inveterately one that focuses on some aspect of sound-symbol correspondance. Many teachers must feel that this is the essence of a total phonics program, therefore a disproportionate amount of time is devoted to teaching those skills.

Teaching students to identify the sounds that stand for written letters in words is best done within the context of words, as this parallels the act of speaking and reading. Because we don't isolate sounds or symbols in either form of communication, it is best not isolate either when teaching, since our ultimate goal involves using them in context. It is suggested that the key comparison words on the front of the lessons be whole words students already know that contain the phonic element being taught in context. The first lesson is the one that helps the student identify initial consonant sounds.

man boy girl
1 2 3

Front

SOUND-SYMBOL ASSOCIATION LESSON
Initial /m/m, /b/b, /g/g

man	boy	girl
1	2	3

Put your finger on the number of the word that begins with the same sound as the words I pronounce.

- | | | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. banana (2) | 11. gave (3) | 21. monkey (1) | 31. bundle (2) |
| 2. music (1) | 12. bark (2) | 22. middle (1) | 32. gallon (3) |
| 3. gift (3) | 13. mud (1) | 23. guard (3) | 33. borrow (2) |

Back

The following lesson focuses on learning medial vowel sounds:

can	sit
1	2

Front

SOUND-SYMBOL ASSOCIATION LESSON Medial /a/a and /i/i		<table border="1" style="display: inline-table;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">can</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">sit</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">1</td> <td style="padding: 2px 5px;">2</td> </tr> </table>	can	sit	1	2
can	sit					
1	2					
Put your finger on the number of the word that has the same medial vowel sound as the words I pronounce.						
1. hill (2)	11. Nick (2)	21. has (1)				
2. lap (1)	12. trip (2)	22. fix (2)				
3. gas (1)	13. pat (1)	23. tack (1)				
		31. stamp (1)				
		32. pinch (2)				
		33. lift (2)				

Back

3) Applied Phonics

Unless specific help is provided in the application of phonics principles towards word building and analysis of unfamiliar words, much of the value of the phonics training up to this point will be nugatory. When students are provided with opportunities to demonstrate that they can indeed combine separate sounds together to decode new words, this success plays an important role in giving them the security and motivation to employ this skill towards becoming more effective independent readers.

Whenever possible, exercises in applied phonics should emphasize meaning, otherwise combining sounds into words can simply be designated word calling. And this is a common criticism of much phonics instruction.

The applied phonics lessons described here are patterned after the format of the lessons in the Durrell/Murphy materials (1972). The original feature of these lessons is that they were designed to follow a particular skill sequence

of one basic reading program and illustrative of the kinds of exercises that can be developed to accompany the sequence in any program.

The focus of the following lesson is on giving practice with beginning consonant substitution with the phonogram it:

hit

1

kit

2

bit

3

Front

APPLIED PHONICS GROUP RESPONSE LESSON - LEVEL 5

hit	kit	bit
1	2	3

All of these words end in it, like sit and fit.
Put your finger on the number of the word that
is suggested by what I say.

Back

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. You do this to a baseball. (1) | 7. Chocolate ones are in cookies. (3) |
| 2. My dog did this to the boy. (3) | 8. Model airplanes come in one. (2) |
| 3. First aid things are in a _____. (2) | 9. What you do to a baseball. (1) |

In the next lesson practice is given in substituting the medial a, i, and o with the e marker to decode new words:

pale

1

pile

2

pole

3

Front

APPLIED PHONICS GROUP RESPONSE LESSON - LEVEL 7

pale	pile	pole
1	2	3

Put your finger on the number of the word that
is suggested by what I say.

Back

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Wood gets stacked this way. (2) | 7. You need one to go fishing. (3) |
| 2. This means faded and light. (1) | 8. Things on top of one another. (2) |
| 3. A long piece of wood. (3) | 9. Her face was _____. (1) |

Summary

"Learning word analysis skills, including phonics is an absolute necessity for learning to read." (Heilman 1972). Basic reading programs that are deficient in instructional suggestions and materials that develop phonics skills, need a supernumerary dose so that decoding will become part of a student's repertoire of independent word attack abilities.

In order for phonics skills to become an automatic adjuvant for decoding unfamiliar words in reading, it is imperative that students first have auditory discrimination ability, then gain thorough knowledge of sound/letter associations, and finally be able to apply the phonics principle learned. Sample lessons were described for teaching each of the three levels of phonics ability. All the exercises made use of every pupil response techniques which are an effective directed teaching method for increasing student on task time and achievement.

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